

Remarks

In the present application, claims 1, 6 and 7 have been amended, new claim 11 has been added, and amendments to the Specification have been offered. Claims 1 to 7, and 11 remain pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of these amendments and the remarks below is respectfully requested.

Objections to the Specification

The Specification has been amended to address an informality noted by the Examiner regarding use of the reference number 128 to refer to two different elements. This amendment does not introduce new matter into the Specification and entry of the amendment is requested. With this amendment, Applicants submit that the objection to the Specification have been overcome and request that the objections to the Specification be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

The Examiner rejected claims 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as including informalities. These rejections are respectfully traversed. Claims 6 and 7 have been amended to address the informalities cited by the Examiner. Reexamination and reconsideration of claims 6 and 7 is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner noted that claims 6 and 7 included allowable subject matter. Claim 6 was indicated as allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim. Claim 7 was indicated as allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 6 and 7. New claim 11 includes claim 6, amended to address the informality as noted above, and to include the limitations of claim 1. Claim 7 has been amended to address the informality noted above. Allowance of claims 7 and 11 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Hablützel, U.S. Patent No. 5,773,759. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, as amended recites in part a collet with slots extending between an inner wall and an outer wall. Some slots extend from a first end toward a second end, and some slots extend from the second end toward the first end. The outer wall is tapered from a greatest diameter proximate the first to a smallest diameter proximate the second end. Each of the slots in the second end are closed off at the first end by a portion of the first end extending from the inner wall to the outer wall.

The cited prior art, in contrast, only shows webs 18' closing off slots 19, as extending a portion of the distance between the inner wall and the outer wall (see FIG. 4). There is no disclosure of the nature of the configuration, nor reference to any alternative construction, of the webs 18' and 19' in the Specification (see col. 2, lines 47 to 59, for the sole reference to webs 18' and 19'). In FIG. 4, web 18' closes off the bottom of incision 19 adjacent the thickest portion of second part 2, but clearly does not extend from the inner wall of second part 2 to the outer wall of second part 2.

Claim 5 depends from and further limits claim 1.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claims 1 and 5 are not rendered obvious by the cited prior art and that claims 1 and 5 are in condition for immediate allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner rejected claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as obvious over Hablützel. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 2 and 3 depend from and further limit claim 1. Claim 2 recites that the collet of claim 1 is made of metal and claim 3 recites that the metal is brass.

As noted above with regard to claim 1, the cited prior art does not disclose that web 18' at the thickest portion of second part 2 extends from the inner wall to the outer wall of second part 2. Nor does the cited prior art teach or suggest an alternative construction or configuration of web closing off a slot at the thickest portion of the second part.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that the cited prior art does not render claims 2 and 3 obvious and that claims 2 and 3 are in condition for immediate allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Hablützel, in view of Hary, European Patent Office Publication EP 0 167 738. This rejection is respectfully traversed.


Claim 4 depends from and further limits claim 1, and recites that the inner wall of the collet includes ridges. As noted above with regard to claim 1, Hablützel does not disclose that web 18' at the thickest portion of second part 2 extend from the inner wall to the outer wall of second part 2. Nor does Hablützel teach or suggest an alternative construction or configuration of web closing off a slot at the thickest portion of the second part. Hary is cited only for the inclusion of ridges 52 about the inner surface 42 of the rearward end portion 38. Hary does not teach or suggest the collet as recited in claim 1.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that the cited prior art does not render claim 4 obvious and that claim 4 is in condition for immediate allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Amendment and Response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative Alan Stewart at 612.371.5376.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: April 27, 2004

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